

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Love-Less Ash Company Inc.

#### Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### One Piece Flow Manufacturing Helps Love-Less Ash Reduce Lead Time

##### Client Profile:

The Love-Less Ash Vacuum Co., located in Price, Utah, manufactures a vacuum that can pick up hot ashes and not be a fire concern. Love-Less Ash has evolved into the leader in ash vacuums; the company currently has nine employees. Love-Less Ash also manufactures other products, all engineered for real life activities with customers' needs in mind.

##### Situation:

For three years Love-Less Ash has been one of Utah's fastest growing companies, and has had to move from one building to the next without much time to organize and improve product flow. The company traditionally built its products in batches, a choice that limited the activities and productivity of those employees who were not cross trained. The company also did not have enough tooling to do all the work necessary to perform each process. Company executives estimated the actual value-added time on each vacuum to be about 10 minutes.

Concerned about Love-Less Ash's ability to meet growing customer demand and operate in the available workspace, the company's president called on the Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Utah MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to help him develop a one-piece flow model.

##### Solution:

First, Utah MEP conducted a workshop for every Love-Less Ash employee to teach the principles of lean manufacturing and help them understand the steps to eliminating non-value-added activity and create flow. Love-Less Ash personnel then laid out an assembly line and began to build its products one at a time, at the same time adjusting and leveling out the workload. This trial run went on for a full day while the employees were learning and adjusting the process line. At the end of the day the results were impressive: lead times were significantly reduced, non-value-added employee activity was eliminated, and productivity improved such that a completed product came off the line every 30 seconds. Love-Less Ash's executives are no longer concerned about meeting customer demand, and the company has incorporated one piece flow into daily operations.

##### Results:

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Reduced lead time to under three minutes.

Virtually eliminated non-value-added time for each employee.

Improved productivity to have a completed product come off the line every 30 seconds.

### **Testimonial:**

"I was amazed at how much we and the Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership were able to get done in a short period of time. We are now gearing up for our peak season and are working on setting up one piece flow as the new way we do business."

Mike Loveless, Owner